

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **LEGISLATIVE**

DATE: July 5, 2006

Committee Members Present:	William Thomas, Chairman
Supervisors F. Thomas	Joan Sady, Clerk
Belden	Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office
Gabriels	Specialist
Stec	
Merlino	
Girard	

Absent:

Supervisor Monroe

Mr. F. Thomas called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Gabriels, seconded by Mr. Girard and carried unanimously to accept the minutes of the previous meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. F. Thomas referred to the Agenda packet, previously mailed to each of the Committee members. He began with Agenda Item 1, Resolution No. 348 of 2006 entitled "In Opposition to Prohibit Arresting State Troopers from Performing Prosecutorial Responsibilities in Local Justice Courts Relating to Traffic Infractions." He reminded the Committee members the resolution had been presented to the full Board on May 12, 2006, and the Board had referred the item back to committee for clarification. Subsequently, he said he discussed the issue with District Attorney Hogan and learned the DA's office does, in-fact, prosecute these infractions. Therefore, he reported, the DA did not feel this legislation would have an impact on Warren County's current procedures.

Following a brief discussion, motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried unanimously that Warren County not take any action on this particular issue.

Mr. F. Thomas turned to Agenda Item 2, Assembly Bill A.6785-B and Senate Bill S.2847-B, which establishes a real property tax exemption for increased value of property in a hamlet or moderate intensity use area in the Adirondack Park. He reminded the Committee members the item had been tabled at their Committee meeting held on June 6, 2006.

Mr. Belden said it was his understanding the Committee had been in favor of the tax exemption, but felt the scope (within a particular hamlet) was too limited. He said he would prefer the exemption be extended to the outlying district, beyond the hamlet.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board, queried whether or not the Committee members were in support of the Bill, with the added provision that the exemption be expanded as mentioned above.

Mr. Wm. Thomas recommended the County could support the Bill, on its own, and then urge the Legislature to expand the scope beyond the hamlets, in the future.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Girard and carried unanimously to support the Assembly Bill A.6785-B and Senate Bill S.2847-B, which establishes a real property tax exemption for increased value of property in a hamlet or moderate intensity use area in the

Adirondack Park, *with a request* that the Legislature give future consideration to expanding the area beyond a hamlet; and authorized a resolution be prepared for the July 14th Board meeting. A copy of the proposed bill is on file with the minutes.

Next, Mr. F. Thomas turned to Agenda Item 3, Assembly Bill A.10903 and Senate Bill S.7743, which would require local governments in the Adirondack Park to forward building permits to the appropriate agencies regulating the work authorized. He explained this item had also been tabled at the prior Committee meeting.

Mr. Belden stated he understood the proposed Bill would actually add a minimum of 30 days to each building permit issued, which would create unnecessary delays with all building projects. He said he felt it was hard enough to get a response from the APA, now, under the current system.

Mr. Gabriels concurred, and noted the proposed Bill would eliminate the Town of Bolton's 30 year-old standing agreement with the APA.

Mr. Wm. Thomas said he felt Senator Little's intention behind the Bill was linked to various building permits that had been approved at a local level, only to have the APA later identify violations within the permits. He said, he felt the proposed Bill would eliminate that confusion since the APA would review the permit before the local authorities. He pointed out that the if the APA failed to respond within 30 days, the Agency would automatically lose jurisdiction over the permit.

Mr. Belden pointed out the APA had already approved the various municipalities' zoning regulations. He said he felt the APA's review of the permits would be redundant and an added layer of unnecessary government control.

Mr. Gabriels said he would prefer for the obligation to work in reverse. He suggested the APA could solicit the building permits for review, on a 30-day cycle, rather than making it the towns' obligation.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried unanimously to oppose Assembly Bill A.10903 and Senate Bill S.7743, which would require local governments in the Adirondack Park to forward building permits to the appropriate agencies regulating the work authorized; and authorized a resolution be prepared for the July 14th Board meeting. A copy of the proposed Bill is on file with the minutes.

Mr. F. Thomas continued Agenda review at Item 4, a referral from the Insurance Committee with regards to the minimum enrollment limits for municipal cooperatives for health insurance. He reported it was his understanding the County's health insurance broker, Capital Financial Group, was currently working to establish an experience-rated health insurance pool for the employees of Warren County. He explained the State Insurance Department currently required a minimum of 2,000 enrollees for such an experience rated pool. (See the Insurance Committee minutes of April 21, 2006 and May 24, 2006 for more detailed information.)

Mr. F. Thomas pointed out the Insurance Committee had recently directed John Weber, President of Capital Financial, to draft a letter to the State Insurance Department, which would request a lower minimum enrollment of 1,500.

Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, reported she had not yet received Mr. Weber's draft letter to distribute to the Committee members.

Mr. Gabriels, as a member of the Insurance Committee, said it was his understanding his fellow Committee members were seeking the Legislative Committee's support of the lower enrollment level.

Motion was made by Mr. Gabriels, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to support the initiative to establish an experience rated health insurance pool and to urge the State Insurance Department to reduce the minimum of 2,000 enrollees down to 1,500 minimum; and authorized a resolution of support be prepared for the July 14th Board meeting.

Moving on to Agenda Item 5, Rural Recovery Action Plan from Assemblyman Roy J. McDonald, of the 112th Assembly District, Mr. F. Thomas stated this item had also been tabled at the last Committee meeting. He said it was his understanding the Committee members had wanted time to review the action plan more closely.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Gabriels to support the Rural Recovery Action Plan from Assemblyman Roy J. McDonald, of the 112th Assembly District.

Mr. Stec explained it was his opinion the plan was proposed in an effort to address the disbursement of the population within the rural counties across New York State. He noted, of the 62 NYS counties, 18 are metropolitan and 44 are rural counties. He directed attention to page 7 of the Action Plan (attached to the Agenda packet) which was an outline of Assemblyman McDonald's 9 point plan.

Mr. Stec acknowledged both the State Senate and State Assembly were controlled by representatives from the metropolitan counties. He mentioned the Rural Recovery Action Plan would be wonderful for the rural county residents if all 9 points were accepted by the State Legislature. However, he expressed his concern that the metropolitan counties would probably not support the Plan.

Mr. F. Thomas commented that he felt it was important for Warren County to support Assemblyman McDonald's plan. He said he would at least like to see the issue debated at the State level.

Mr. F. Thomas called the question and motion was carried unanimously to support the Rural Recovery Action Plan from Assemblyman Roy J. McDonald, of the 112th Assembly District; and to authorize a resolution be prepared for the July 14th Board meeting. A copy of the proposed plan is on file with the minutes.

Mr. F. Thomas returned to Agenda review at Item 6, Warren County Board of Elections request for Legislative action. He directed attention to the letter dated June 29, 2006 from the election commissioners, Ms. Casey and Mr. Montfort.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Gabriels to support the request to allow registered voters, within a jurisdiction, to vote on any available voting machine within a Polling Location with a "shared" similar ballot.

Mr. Stec said it was his understanding an effort was underway to consolidate polling locations which would bring several voting districts to the same geographic location. He noted the County had 70 election districts, yet only 27 polling locations.

Mr. Stec pointed out the new voting regulations require a "more user friendly voting machine" be made available to assist persons with physical challenges. He noted the County could save a considerable amount of money if it were allowed to provide one machine for each polling location, rather than one machine for each election district.

Mr. Gabriels concurred with Mr. Stec's explanation, however, he said, he felt the attached letter did not fully explain the issue. He said he would like to see the letter expanded to include more particulars.

Mr. F. Thomas called the question and the motion was carried unanimously to support an amendment to the State Election Law which would allow registered voters, within a jurisdiction, to vote on any available voting machine within a Polling Location with a "shared" similar ballot; and authorized a resolution be prepared for the July 14th Board meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Belden and seconded by Mr. Girard, Mr. F. Thomas adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist